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II. HABITATION.

[361] [592] [177] The original Tukuna habitation was a large, isolated, communal dwelling, *maloca*, occupied by more than one family. All settlements made up of a number of houses together, like Tabatinga, São José do Javary, and Caldeirão, owe their origin to Neobrazilian initiative and were so contrary to tribal custom that the complaint was always heard that the Tukuna did not want to be herded together but would spread out again through the jungle.

[611] [591] I have often been told by the Indians themselves that in such or such a place there was once a great maloca of this or that clan. I do not know how to interpret this statement, for though the clans of the Tukuna are patrilineal, the family is more matrilocal than patrilocal, so that only in very special circumstances would all the men of one maloca belong to the same clan. However, the clan tẽ'ma (Burity)—if, as tradition says, its members once spoke a language different from that of the other clans—might have been collectively localized.

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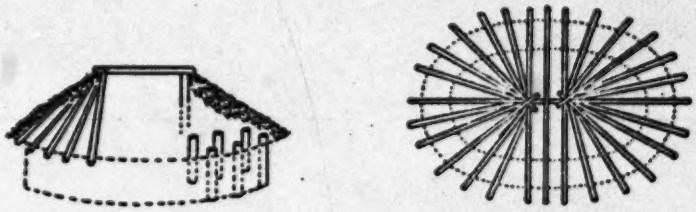

a *b*

Fig. 1. Maloca or communal dwelling. *a*. Sketch showing roof and interior construction. *b*. Plan of rafters.

Houses

These houses were apparently circular; actually, however, there was always a small, rectangular central section, with a semicircular roof bay at each end (fig. 1). The rafters of this rectangular section, which formerly was only some two or three meters long, rested on a short ridgepole supported by pillars or posts. At each end, a little below the ridgepole and in the angles formed by the two outer pairs of rafters, there was a small horizontal crossbeam fastened to the rafters, and upon this rested the rafters of the roof bay (fig. 1, *b*).

Two series of vertical supports divided the interior into two concentric parts, the inner series—at least, the highest and strongest—being of *acapú* wood. The [824] house was covered with *caranã* thatching, the stems being intertwined and attached to a long lath of *paxiuba*[1] wood. The tips of the leaves were split and were also intertwined. The laths with the thatching attached were tied horizontally on the rafters with strips of the inner bark. For the first three or four years, at least, this covering was an absolutely impermeable protection from the tropical rains.

The walls, more or less the height of a man, were made of small poles of paxiuba wood, or of the same material as the roof. In a few houses the interstices were filled

[1] An exceedingly tough Amazonian palm (*Socratea exorrhiza*), the roots of which are so thorny that they are used to scrape manioc roots.

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with clay. In Igarapé na'inõ-tį I saw the remains of a structure of this kind, which had been inhabited until about fifty years ago. 342

Midway in the wall of the roof bay at either end was a door (i"ya) made of a special and very durable thatching called čatį" and small poles of paxiuba. The door was completely free from the house and was removed and propped at one side when not in use; it was closed from the inside by a crossbeam.

These houses were tightly constructed in order to serve as a refuge from mosquitoes, for, unlike the Omágua, the Tukuna formerly did not have the mosquito net. Through contact with the Neobrazilians, however, they at once recognized the enormous advantage that this article offers in a region permanently scourged by mosquitoes, and today mosquito nets are found in all Tukuna houses. [177] [352]

Modification of house type.—The introduction of the mosquito net completely altered the style of dwelling. Since it was no longer necessary to seal the house hermetically, the walls were abandoned, and today they are only rarely seen. Many Tukuna also gave up one or both of the semicircular roof bays, lengthening the central section to compensate for this, so that an open, rectangular shelter finally resulted. This is probably the type to which Tessmann refers when he speaks of the quadrangular Tukuna houses.

Formerly the Tukuna dwelt exclusively on firm ground, and the construction of their houses was not suitable to another environment. After they spread out along the banks and islands of the Solimões, many found their dwellings periodically invaded by the flooding river. They were therefore obliged either to live on a platform of poles, like the Omágua of old, or to move temporarily to more solid ground.

Occasionally I encountered a type of structure for which I have no certain explanation, namely, a rectangular house of small dimensions (3 by 4 m.) resting on tall poles 2 m. high or more. This construction is certainly not an adaptation to the floods, for the houses I saw were all on solid ground. With one exception, all were found in the yard of a larger and more usual house.

These little dwellings are always inhabited by bachelors or by newlyweds; I am therefore inclined to regard them as derived from the small "loft" which is always found below the highest part of the thatched roof and more or less at the same level as these separate houses. These lofts also serve as dormitories for bachelors or newlyweds. According to the Tukuna, the small houses are a recent innovation, adopted by their inhabitants "because they thought it better that way." Perhaps the innovation is due to the growing individualism of the new generation. It does not appear to me to be an element borrowed from another native culture. [176]

With the exception of a few dwellings of some Tukuna who snobbishly vie with one another in copying the shanties of the Neobrazilians, the houses of these Indians are even today outstanding because of the elegance of their light yet strong furnishings, and their ample and spacious construction. On the Jacurapá, a tributary of the Içá, I measured one that was 31 by 15 m., and 10 m. high, yet this was not one of the largest.

These Indians construct such spacious dwellings because their villages have no houses exclusively for festivities and, since all celebrations stem from private ini- [345]

[a] T., na-rį-konę, "tongue of anteater."

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tiative, they must be held in the several private houses. Furthermore, on these occasions one can count on the presence of perhaps three hundred or more persons; hence houses of the measurements given above are barely adequate, since most of the ceremonies take place inside the house, not in the yard.

Names of houses.—Formerly, every house had an individual name given by the owner who built it. Some house owners observe this custom even today. The construction completed, the owner invites neighbors and friends to a "hair-trimming party" (the reference is to the irregular tips of the new thatched roof), and on this occasion he announces the name, chosen by himself freely and not dependent on the clan, as are the names of persons. Some examples: či:'ru-gi̯ne (či:'ru, swallow; gi̯'ne, dwelling); čẹi̯i̯'ne (čẹi̯i̯', to soar in the air); pa:'ru (the name of a mythical *serra* [p. 141]); ṅi̯rẽ-gi̯ne (ṅi̯, to float; rẽ, tied together); taive-gi'ne (taive', "tauary, a tree [*Couratari* sp.]), the house of the culture hero dyoi'.

Interior and living accommodations.—Attached to the walls is the most characteristic object of the modern house, a sort of stage or platform of paxiuba palm at least 2 by 1.5 m., but usually much longer. Its elevation varies from 10 to 70 cm. In houses inhabited by more than one family there is a platform for each family, besides the previously mentioned lofts beneath the roof.

Seated upon these platforms, the Indians pass the better part of the day, working or conversing. And here at night they spread out large cloths made from the inner bark of the *tururí* tree[a] and erect the mosquito nets. Formerly, there was no such platform; it became necessary only when the mosquito net was adopted. Its name, dyura' (Lg., *giráu*), is Tupi.

Originally the Tukuna slept in hammocks (na:'pa) made by weaving tucum thread to make an elastic mesh; beneath, they maintained a small fire on cold nights. *Tucum* thread, twisted by the women on the naked thigh or abdomen, is today another article of Tukuna commerce with the Neobrazilians. I never saw thread of *ambaúva*[b] fibers, which, according to Tessmann, is manufactured by the Tukuna, and none of the Indians whom I consulted had any idea of its preparation.

The hammock is made by passing an "endless" thread around two vertical posts, the distance between them equal to the length desired for the hammock. A shuttle of paxiuba wood or, as a makeshift, a leafstalk of the burity palm is used for the weaving. Formerly, hammocks were apparently sometimes made of tucum in a technique of double transversal threads, but the Tukuna themselves say that this type was an imitation of the hammocks of a strange tribe, exactly which tribe they do not know. I never saw cotton used for the woof, as Martius reports.

The hammocks, in spite of having "cuffs" (*sobrepunhos*) are usually short, but, owing to the weaving technique, they stretch enormously in a lateral direction. The Indian women know how to produce various decorative patterns by inserting black threads or even red, yellow, and green.

Nowadays, the hammock—which is never set up beneath a mosquito net—serves for the daytime rest, since rocking is the only way of keeping at a little distance the horrible plague of mosquitoes and gadflies. It is offered as a privilege to an honored guest.

[a] T., nu'ẽvẽ, nyo'ã.
[b] *Cecropia* sp.; known also as embaúba, imbaúba.

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881 773 539 *a*) A girl was in seclusion; a feast was about to be celebrated. Aside from her, there was no one in the house. In the kitchen there lay beneath a cover on the platform (girãu) all the smoked game for the feast. Suddenly, through a crack in the wall of her room, the vərëkʲ observed a smoked monkey descend from the platform. Seizing a blowgun, it began to dance with this up and down the kitchen. Then a roasted sloth also clambered down, going first to the fireplace to warm itself, then it searched for the rattle stick, which was already prepared for the feast, and in its turn began to dance to and fro. After some time both returned to the platform.

As soon as her mother returned to the house, the vərëkʲ told her what she had seen. The mother went to the smoked meat on the platform, examined the sloth, and, seeing that it was dirty with ashes, believed what her daughter had told her. "Nothing like this has ever happened before; I believe that you are going to die!" she said to her daughter. And sure enough, the following morning the girl lay dead in her seclusion room.

342 881 [616] Formerly, a small room, na-piˣiˣ (pl. 11, *a*) was made for the girl as soon as possible, against the east wall of the house if she belonged to moiety A, against the west wall if she belonged to moiety B. This little retreat was circular, two meters in diameter or a little more, and had no floor, since the vərëkʲ sleeps in her hammock throughout her seclusion. The walls are made of long, white strips of burity, tied with cipó firmly together in horizontal bands. These extend from the floor to the roof thatch, where their tips are bent toward the front. On the left side (looking at the room) there is a door, closed by a kind of hanging mat made from [285] burity frondstalks set in a horizontal position and held firm by two vertical rods. Often today the seclusion room is square and is not erected where it should be, because the position of the house on the banks of the Solimões or igapó does not permit it. In general, to make such a room, people are called together for a work [476] party (uajurí) to which, above all, members of the clans of the vərëkʲ's moiety are invited.

881 *Preparations for the feast.*—The preparations for the feast which now begins may take more than two months, sometimes requiring even one or two more work parties. Nowadays, what really delays completion of the preparations is the difficulty of collecting a sufficient quantity of smoked game for the number of guests; [136] game is now rare in the country (p. 26), and even fish are not caught easily.

[252] The game is roasted on a forked grill, first in the jungle and later in the kitchen, where it is then stored on its own large, covered platform. When the last pieces arrive, the first are already desiccated to the point where they more or less resemble charred wood. At the same time, the women prepare alcoholic drinks, of [273] which a sufficient quantity is required not only for the feast itself but also for the preliminary work party. In the meantime the date of the celebration must be calculated, so that the invitations may be issued.

881 574 *Invitations.*—Two invitations are given for any celebration: the first advising of the approximate time with relation to the phase of the moon ("in the first full moon"), the other fixing the exact day that the ceremony begins. Feasts are preferably held during the full moon, not because any magical influence is attributed to it but simply because it is much more agreeable to have the house and yard of the ceremony flooded with moonlight than plunged in darkness.

881 574 202 Invitations are delivered personally by the host, that is, by the vərëkʲ's father or by a person especially charged by him. The messenger travels from house to house informing the residents that the celebration is drawing near and that the

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CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 **Farming.**—The main *Tucuna* crops are bitter manioc, sweet manioc (macaxera), cara (*Dioscorea*), and maize. The last is planted with some ceremony. There are also at least three species of edible tubers which are not used by civilized people.

226 227 **Fishing and hunting.**—Fish, of great importance to the *Tucuna*, are taken with four- to nine-pronged javelins, arrows, harpoon arrows, baskets, weirs, traps, and a drug made of timbó. The Indians fish almost daily from childhood. On the Solimões, they are expert fishers of pirarucú, an important article of commerce.

224 177 411 Hunting today is unimportant, since game has been depleted to fill the demand for hides. The *Tucuna* now use firearms, but formerly employed the bow and arrow, spear, and blowgun. They also use pitfalls and several types of snares and traps. The blowgun, once the principal weapon, is disappearing.

222 262 [245] **Gathering.**—The wild burity, bacaba, patauá, and açahy palms are of great economic value. Some *Tucuna* plant Brazil nut trees near their houses. They eat certain frogs, Coleoptera larvae, and female red ants at hiving time. They like wild honey but keep no bees.

231 **Domesticated animals.**—The *Tucuna* raise a few chickens, but do not want hogs or other domestic animals because they dirty the premises. They keep young wild mammals and birds uncaged.

412 252 [177] [434] **Food preparation.**—Instead of a mortar, the *Tucuna* use a trough with a half-moon-shaped rocker of thick and heavy wood.

The making of manioc flour, introduced by the Neo-Brazilians, became one of the principal sources of income among the *Tucuna*.

HOUSES

342 The old houses had a small rectangular central portion with a short ridge pole mounted on props. Each end was semicircular, so that the ground plan was oval or nearly round. The walls were of a man's height, and were made of boards of paxiuba or of straw. The house could be sealed tight against mosquitoes. Families occupied the lateral corridors, the central space being reserved for ceremonies. All houses were spacious and well built.

177 342 352 513 The introduction of mosquito nets made house walls unnecessary. People slept on bunks along the walls, covered with mosquito nets, instead of in hammocks. Many houses were built without the semicircular extremities but with a longer central part, being like an open rectangular ranch house with a ridge pole. When the tribe occupied the flood plains of the shores and islands, they built houses on piles.

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PLATE 65.—**Tucuna Indians of the 19th century.** *Top:* Part of girl's puberty ceremony. (After Marcoy, 1869.) *Bottom:* Tucuna of the upper Amazon; a *Mundurucú* woman in center. (After Osculati, 1854.)

[p. 714 B]

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More than among other tribes, *Tucuna* children receive corporal punishment, especially with the external application of nettle flowers that are grown for this purpose at the edge of the yard. They play with dolls carved of muirapiranga, figures of animals, little canoes, small bows and arrows, and buzz-disks of gourd shells.

Boys' puberty observances.—There is a tradition that in former times, young men were initiated when their voices changed, being secluded and then perhaps formally admitted to the secrets of the megaphone (tá/ki) through an application of snuff called ká/vi, which is still used occasionally. There are no vestiges of homosexuality, as claimed by Tessmann (1930, p. 563).

Girls' puberty rites.—At her first menstruation, a girl is secluded in the house loft. This is not so cruel as certain travelers (Bates, 1863, 2:406) proclaim. Every girl submits willingly, convinced that her peculiar condition requires it and that its omission would be dangerous, as she is surrounded by invisible "immortals" and demons, who seek contact with her and at times cause extraordinary supernatural experiences. Many stories told to a girl in seclusion illustrate this dangerous state.

The people hasten to prepare for the girl a circular seclusion room adjacent to the east or west wall of the house, according to her moiety. They decorate the walls with painted bands and lines, and figures of the sun, moon, morning star, and deer, the last a symbol of vigilance and not a "totem."

Preparations for the feast sometimes require months. They prepare roast meat and beverages and make the house ready. The girl's father is host, but her paternal uncle and his wife direct all ceremonies concerning her person, being wholly responsible for her. Friends and acquaintances receive two invitations to the feast; the second, which specifies the date, is issued to the sound of the bark trumpet, which is carried hidden in the canoe.

In the exterior portion of the house, corresponding to the girl's seclusion room, a long fence is made with straw walls to conceal the megaphone (tá/ki), its statues, and the bark trumpet which operate behind it each night of the feast and are removed before daybreak and hidden underwater in the creek. People are chosen and invited to operate these instruments by the head of the house when the time comes; there is no permanent assignment. Inside the fence of the megaphone, snuff (ká/vi) or tobacco powder is taken with several ingredients (but not parica). The snuff is kept in a snail shell and blown into the nose by means of an apparatus made of a tubular bone and two quills of royal sparrow hawk feathers, or by means of a simple taboca (bamboo) tube. Boys of 7 or older customarily are given snuff, after which they may see and touch the instruments within the fence, which are taboo to women and to boys who have not yet had it.

5: Bates N-5 (1848-1859) 1892
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which the village is built extends on one side nearly a mile into the forest, but on the other side the descent into the lowland begins close to the streets; the hill sloping abruptly towards a boggy meadow surrounded by woods, through which a narrow winding path continues the slope down to a cool shady glen, with a brook of icy-cold water flowing at the bottom. At mid-day the vertical sun penetrates into the gloomy depths of this romantic spot, lighting up the leafy banks of the rivulet and its clean sandy margins, where numbers of scarlet, green, and black tanagers and brightly-coloured butterflies sport about in the stray beams. Sparkling brooks, large and small, traverse the glorious forest in almost every direction, and one is constantly meeting, whilst rambling through the thickets, with trickling rills and bubbling springs, so well provided is the country with moisture. Some of the rivulets flow over a sandy and pebbly bed, and the banks of all are clothed with the most magnificent vegetation conceivable. I had the almost daily habit, in my solitary walks, of resting on the clean banks of these swift-flowing streams, and bathing for an hour at a time in their bracing waters; hours which now remain amongst my most pleasant memories. The broad forest roads
361 continue, as I was told, a distance of several days' journey into the interior, which is peopled by Tucúnas and other Indians, living in scattered houses and villages nearly in their primitive state, the nearest village lying about six miles from St. Paulo. The banks of all
● [342] the streams are dotted with palm-thatched dwellings of Tucúnas, all half buried in the leafy wilderness, the scattered families having chosen the coolest and shadiest nooks for their abodes.

I frequently heard in the neighbourhood of these huts the "realejo"
136 or organ bird (Cyphorhinus cantans), the most remarkable songster, by far, of the Amazonian forests. When its singular notes strike the ear for the first time the impression cannot be resisted that they are produced by a human voice. Some musical boy must be gathering fruit in the thickets, and is singing a few notes to cheer himself. The tones become more fluty and plaintive; they are now those of a flageolet, and notwithstanding the utter impossibility of the thing, one is for the moment convinced that somebody is playing that instrument. No bird is to be seen, however closely the surrounding trees and bushes may be scanned, and yet the voice seems to come from the thicket close to one's ears. The ending of the song is rather disappointing. It begins with a few very slow and mellow notes, following each other like the commencement of an air; one listens expecting to hear a complete strain, but an abrupt pause occurs, and then the song breaks down, finishing with a number of clicking unmusical sounds like a piping barrel organ out of wind and tune. I never heard the bird on the Lower Amazons, and very rarely heard it even at Ega; it is the only songster which makes an impression on the natives, who sometimes rest their paddles whilst travelling in their small canoes along the shady by-streams, as if struck by the mysterious sounds.

171 The Tucúna Indians are a tribe resembling much the Shumánas,
181 Passés, Jurís, and Mauhés in their physical appearance and customs. They lead, like those tribes, a settled agricultural life, each horde obeying

5: Bates N-5 (1848-1859) 1892
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a chief of more or less influence, according to his energy and ambition, 171
and possessing its pajé or medicine man, who fosters its superstitions ; 181
but they are much more idle and debauched than other Indians belonging to the superior tribes. They are not so warlike and loyal as the Mundurucús, although resembling them in many respects, nor have they the slender figures, dignified mien, and gentle disposition of the Passés ; there are, however, no trenchant points of difference to distinguish them from these highest of all the tribes. Both men and women are tattooed, 304
the pattern being sometimes a scroll on each cheek, but generally rows of short straight lines on the face. Most of the older people wear bracelets, anklets, and garters of tapir-hide or tough bark ; in their homes they 301 291
wear no other dress except on festival days, when they ornament themselves with feathers or masked cloaks made of the inner bark of a tree. They were very shy when I made my first visits to their habitations in the forest, all scampering off to the thicket when I approached, but on 609
subsequent days they became more familiar, and I found them a harmless, good-natured people.

A great part of the horde living at the first Maloca or village dwell in 342
a common habitation, a large oblong hut built and arranged inside with [621]
such a disregard of all symmetry, that it appeared as though constructed by a number of hands, each working independently, stretching a rafter or fitting in a piece of thatch, without reference to what his fellow-labourers were doing. The walls as well as the roof are covered with thatch of palm-leaves ; each piece consisting of leaflets plaited and attached in a row to a lath many feet in length. Strong upright posts support the roof, hammocks being slung between them, leaving a free space for passage and for fires in the middle, and on one side is an elevated stage (*girao*) overhead, formed of split palm-stems. The Tucúnas excel 323
most of the other tribes in the manufacture of pottery. They make 415
broad-mouthed jars, for Tucupí sauce, caysúma or mandioca beer, capable of holding twenty or more gallons, ornamenting them outside with crossed diagonal streaks of various colours. These jars, with cooking-pots, smaller jars for holding water, blow-pipes, quivers, matirí bags * [352]
full of small articles, baskets, skins of animals, and so forth, form the principal part of the furniture of their huts, both large and small. The dead bodies of their chiefs are interred, the knees doubled up, in large 766
jars under the floors of their huts.

The semi-religious dances and drinking bouts usual amongst the [273]
settled tribes of Amazonian Indians are indulged in to greater excess [535]
by the Tucúnas than they are by most other tribes. The Juruparí or 776
Demon is the only superior being they have any conception of, and his name is mixed up with all their ceremonies, but it is difficult to ascertain what they consider to be his attributes. He seems to be believed in simply as a mischievous imp, who is at the bottom of all those mishaps

* These bags are formed of remarkably neat twine made of Bromelia fibres [286]
elaborately knitted, all in one piece, with sticks ; a belt of the same material, but more closely woven, being attached to the top to suspend them by. They afford good examples of the mechanical ability of these Indians. The Tucúnas also possess the [281]
art of skinning and stuffing birds, the handsome kinds of which they sell in great [439]
numbers to passing travellers.

5: Bates N-5 (1848-1859) 1892
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776 of their daily life, the causes of which are not very immediate or obvious to their dull understandings. It is vain to try to get information out of

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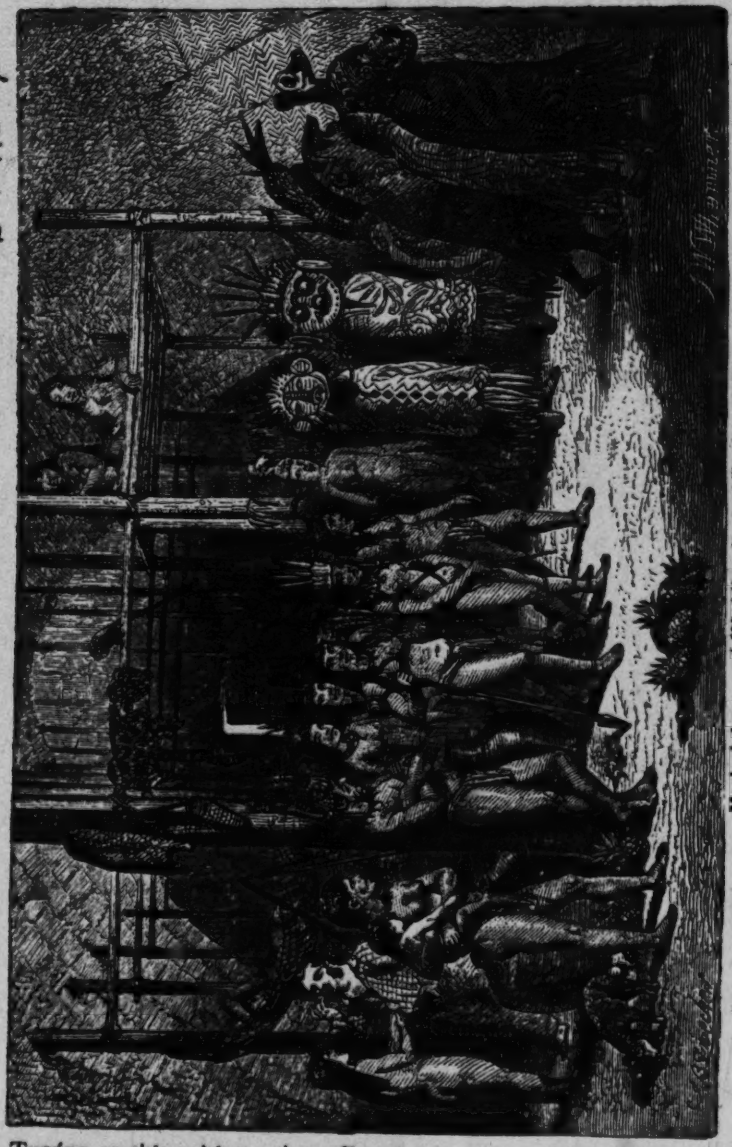

Masked dance and Wedding-feast of Tucúna Indians.

776 a Tucúna on this subject; they affect great mystery when the name is mentioned, and give very confused answers to questions: it was clear,